

DESIGNATION OF EMERGENCY EMPLOYEES

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recommends that emergency employees be notified of their status every year. It is time to inform these employees of this designation.

What is an emergency employee?

Each year, the head of an agency or his or her designee designates emergency employees for the agency. The term “emergency employee” denotes those employees who **must** report for work in emergency situations as determined by their agency.

Agencies should designate emergency employees that are critical to agency operations in dismissal or closure situations. When making these designations, management should determine the minimum number of positions and employees necessary to perform essential office functions.

What should be considered when designating emergency employees?

Here are some factors that may impact how you designate emergency employees. If these special circumstances apply to your employees, you should address the circumstances in your designation notices.

- Does the essential function occur only in specific situations or at specific times? If so, emergency employees may need to work only if the situation or time occurs during the emergency closing. If the essential function will not occur during the closing, emergency employees may not need to work.
- Does the essential function consist of a small portion of the duties performed by a group of employees? If so, it may not be necessary for **all** employees involved to report to work during emergency closings.
- Is the essential function one that may or may not occur, depending on the circumstances? If so, you may wish to develop an alternate plan. For instance, you could call emergency employees on an “as needed” basis or rotate emergency office coverage each month.

What happens if an emergency employee does not report to work during an office closure?

Emergency employees who do not report to work are usually considered to be absent without leave (AWOL). Based on individual circumstances, AWOL may be changed to another type of leave (e.g., annual leave or sick leave) with supervisory approval. If the absence cannot be justified and AWOL is charged, please contact the employee relations staff.

How do I designate emergency employees?

Once you have identified the emergency employees for your area, please prepare a draft notice ([using the attached sample format](#)) for each emergency employee. If any of the special circumstances outlined above apply to your situation, notices to the employees should be modified accordingly.

Please email a copy of your final notices to Jeremy.Owens@bpd.treas.gov by September 15, 2006.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact Jeremy at 304-480-8267.

Attachment

Sample Memo

DATE:

TO: (Employee)

FROM: (Supervisor)

SUBJECT: Emergency Employee Designation

Our office must occasionally shut down due to hazardous weather or other emergency conditions. During such closings, some essential functions must continue even when the general employee population is excused for all or part of a day. To ensure continuous operations, certain emergency employees must report for or remain on duty during emergency office closings.

Emergency employees are identified and notified annually. The _____
_____ has been determined to be an essential function. You have been identified as an emergency employee.

Your emergency responsibilities include...